

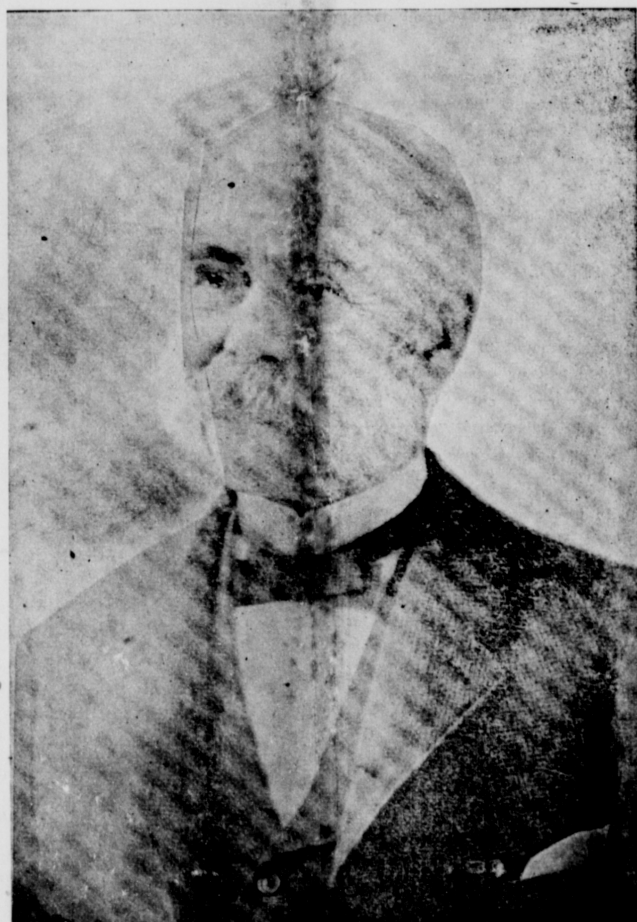
BLUE GRASS BLADE

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DEVOTED TO THE PROPAGANDA OF FREEDOM OF THOUGHT



N. F. GRISWOLD

Strong supporter of Freethought and New England pioneer

N. F. Griswold

The character of man is to be judged by his deeds and not by his profession of belief. It has been well said that actions speak more eloquent than words, and the subject we now have before us, furnishes an illustration of the truth contained in that famous expression. Savage non-essentials and bigoted intolerance have combined to produce serious reflection in the minds of honest and liberal men, ultimately leading them to an abandonment of all forms of religion or religious worship.

The history of Freethought contains many generous and unselfish characters. Paine gave his all for the cause of independence and since his day, Freethinkers have been found who have never failed to give of their means, at any time, when a call was made for the means necessary to better propagate truth or to defend it from assault.

N. F. Griswold, of Meriden, Conn., now rapidly nearing life's allotted span, must be written as one of those generous and heroic few who has from time to time given of his means for Freedom's cause. Though not gifted with eloquent speech for public occasions he has done still better for the cause we love for his contributions, first to one cause and then to another, if known, would amount to several thousands of dollars, and he has taken great delight in thus extending aid in another direction than public work. And yet, were it not for such as he, the public part of our work, the propaganda, including different representatives of the Freethought press would have languished and probably died for lack of support years ago.

Living upon New England soil, in the famous old state of Connecticut, he has experienced a varied, and withal, a successful life. He was born in Lockport, New York, but was a mere infant, when he was taken, motherless, to Connecticut. His mother died when he was but three day's old, hence, unable to know by experience the supreme love and affection of a mother's heart. At this tender age he was placed in the care of his grand parents where he remained until he was six years of age, at which period of his life his father married a second time and he then took charge of his son in person. At the age of eleven years he started out in life for himself, an age when most children are still at school, and by working upon a farm, then in a country store, he managed to make his own way in the world of struggle and toil. Following this he learned the trade of a tinner and it was here that he laid the foundations for his future successful career. In a short time thereafter he managed to buy out his employer and he began a business venture in his own behalf. In the course of time, as the business grew and flourished, he organized that well known co-operative firm, the Griswold-Richmond-Glock Company, at Meriden, which came to be recognized as one of the most successful business enterprises in New England.

In his younger days and during his early manhood, Mr. Griswold was a member of the Universalist Society. He attended the Sunday meetings and took a prominent part in the work of the Sunday School. He took a great interest in this work. It is reported that by some unaccountable way Mr. Griswold obtained a copy of one of the late Col. Ingersoll's lectures which he read with both pleasure and profit. The intellectual food he had craved had now been furnished him. Very soon afterwards Ingersoll lectured in New Haven, Conn., and Mr. Griswold took advantage of this opportunity to hear him. Elated with the flood of rich thought that came from the distinguished orator's lips, Mr. Griswold sent Col. Ingersoll a check to have him come to Meriden and lecture before the people of that old Puritanical town. Uncertain of his ground of being able to secure the Town Hall for Ingersoll to lecture, he sought out the trustees of the Universalist Society and asked for the privilege of using their church building for that purpose. It was denied him. This act of intolerance and religious bigotry became the one great turning point in his life. On the theory that such illiberality was not in accord with the honest impulses of the human heart, and believing himself out of place among such a society, he now severed his connection therewith and came over to the side of Freethought where he has since remained, loyal and true.

Mr. Griswold now became a subscriber to the Freethought Journals of the country. All, at different times, have been made the recipients of his extreme generosity. From this time he devoted himself to aiding the cause at every opportunity. The Blue Grass Blade has been favored with his bountiful generosity and contributions, whenever an emergency arose that rendered financial help a necessity. In this manner has Mr. Griswold donated thousands of dollars and only those who have had to go through the struggle of keeping the propaganda alive can possibly know and fully appreciate the great value of his service thus rendered.

Believing in the principles of Freethought with all the ardency of his beneficent nature, he regarded the movement as the only hope of freedom and light. He had no longer any use for the church as an institution, and yet he has never lacked for a host of admiring friends among his neighbors. These are testimonials to his sterling worth. Not one selfish thought did he ever entertain. Born in 1824 he is now 84 years of age, but still of a remarkable vigor and intellect for such an age.

It is with profound pleasure and sincere admiration that the Blade is able to pay this small tribute to one who has done so much for the cause in a general and substantial way, and for the Blade itself, in particular.

Were there more Freethinkers like the subject of this sketch the cause would never be permitted to languish.

Bryan and the Religious Question

Great Exponent of Democracy Taken to Task
by a Woman Writer for His Religious
Pretensions Being Put into a Political Campaign.

(By Harriet M. Closs).

Whenever a new minister locates among us I attend church at least once, and during the winter's "protracted efforts" I make the round of the revivals, and take stock of those who have contracted the cold weather contagion which recurs with unchanging regularity and exposes most of the invertebrates in the vicinity besides inducing the loquacious admission of irresponsibility by the victims who seek with frenzied fervor to get something for nothing.

The resident ministers call a crowd of perhaps 50 people who listen with more or less indifference to the "old, old story" that is said to be refreshing and regenerating. As you know, resident ministers are paid (?) from six to twelve hundred dollars per annum according to the size of the parish.

Well, I recently repaired to the largest auditorium in our city to hear the same "old story" by the renowned orator William J. Bryan. The house was crowded to its utmost capacity and the doors closed against many clamoring to enter. "The Prince of Peace" is a lecture prepared for the general platform. It is two hours plus in length and the regular charge for same is \$500, however being sandwiched between two regular lectures we escaped for half price, but as the time was cut in two by the democratic rhetorician we paid the regular rate, tho' later, while in Chicago he delivered the same lecture for the Catholic Woman's Society free of charge.

Of course it is Brother Bryan's privilege to lecture free, or for \$500. I state the fact as evidence of the penetrating business foresight which placed the free lecture where it would probably bring the greatest return.

I have, heretofore, held William Jennings Bryan in high regard, but when posing as the exponent of democratic principles he seeks to incorporate religion and politics, it seems to me, time that the thoughtless voters of this country should sit up and take notice.

Bryan's opinion of religion as an individual is none of our concern, but his pretense or belief as the authorized standard bearer of Democracy is of great moment, for if the question of religious sincerity be not established does it not follow that political sincerity should be questioned? I quote from his lecture sparingly, for lack of space but with the assurance of dispassionate consideration or criticism by Blade readers.

He said: "I am interested in the science of government but more interested in religion. I like to address a political meeting but prefer to address a religious gathering. I shall be in the church long after I am out of politics."

We would like to inquire why W. J. O'Brien—as he was introduced at the St. Patrick's day banquet in Chicago—why with his ability as an orator he does not seek preferment from a church conference? The holy See is scouting for capable men. Or why did he not proclaim his christian enthusiasm during the two previous campaigns?

As a sample of profound wisdom how is this?

"Religious sentiment is not fear but the

consciousness that we have come short of the glory of God. Religion is the only basis upon which we can build morality. Morality being the outward manifestation of the inward relation between man and God. Nothing can shake my faith in Jehovah."

Do these assertions sound like those of a sincere investigator who claims to have searched the literature of all religions and analyzed the writings of Darwin, Spencer and Wallace? He says:

"Some believe in the theory of evolution, but I am not convinced that the monkey is any part of my family-tree. If others prefer to find their ancestry in that direction I do not object, but they cannot connect me in the relationship. It takes more faith to jump so many gaps than to believe in the Bible creation."

I passed through a period of skepticism in college and learned of the many guesses that are being made so I went back to the old testament and decided to stand there, and am standing there yet."

Does this savor of the spirit of progression, or of the straightforward sincerity of democratic ideals?

We were regaled at length with the attempted explanation of the miracles and were told that a God who can make a world can do anything he wishes that the transformation in the heart when one begins to hate what he once loved is a greater miracle than that of the loaves and fishes. He continues: "I have seen so many things about me more mysterious than the miracles that I am not willing to allow any miracle to stand between me and the christian religion."

The analytical (?) mind that can see nothing more mysterious in the individual multiplication of loaves and fishes or raising the dead, than in the constantly recurring and natural processes of life and growth and evolution must have some hitch in its machinery or some motive for its methods.

At last we are startled out of our apathy by the exclamation: "Christ in history, there is a fact, face it! The fact that Caesar, Alexander and Napoleon lived is nothing, but the fact that Christ lived means much. The world has never seen such another character as Jesus Christ and we can account for his life only by his divinity and the time will come when every knee shall bow and every tongue confess, and the belief in his teaching shall bring peace to every heart."

Well, during 2000 years of his teaching christendom has been embroiled in destructive conflicts, his pious representatives have reduced the people to penury, massacred the investigator and imprisoned the doubter. Executing his tenets men have become fanatical fiends and forbearance a lost virtue. Seeking to harmonize his contradictory commands thousands have been driven to insanity and suicide, while the alleged working of miracles made it impossible to sustain a system of endeavor that made for progress, much less for peace. The usual hair splitting in regard to the negative form of the golden rule as given by Confucius and the positive as attributed to Jesus was gone over, but William the commentator seems to forget that the new Testament, upon which he stands so firmly, records most of the commandments in the negative form but a small thing like that did

not present his pleading for missionaries to be sent to the heathen "chinese." Having traveled in the Orient Bryan's opinion on the relative merits of Christian and heathen civilization is accepted as final and the latter pronounced a failure, but over against it I quote the opinion of the minister plenipotentiary from England to China. He said on his return to London:

"I have seen more misery, drunkenness and degradation in the streets of London in one day, than I saw in all my twenty years of residence in China."

Isn't that a pretty hard knock on the peace that Bryan declares is to be brought to every heart by the teaching of Jesus?

The fact that this lecture was delivered without a single oratorical flight, and with no show of interest or enthusiasm, no ringing rhetorical outbursts that almost convince without argument seems to me to bear the finger marks of being prepared for a purpose.

In illustrating the beauties of faith Bryan related one story that, though aged, will bear repetition. An old colored man was requested to illustrate his idea of faith and said: "Suppose the Lord should tell me to butt my head through a stone wall it wouldn't be mine to question whether I would get through or not—it would be my business to butt." And the lips of the Nebraskan lengthened into a smile as he said "So it is my place to butt without question, when I do not understand God's ways."

Does our perennial politician apply this rule to every day affairs?

To be sure many will admit that "butting" the Republican party is an adamant proposition, but does our good brother trust in God for success or to the political machine and the rank and file of the ballot holders? Does he remain quietly at home and "butt" with faith believing that the Lord will bind victory's banner about his bruised form?

One is constrained to call into question the religious sincerity of a man whose assertions contradict his actions, hence it is only logical to apply the same rule along all lines of life.

Democracy stands for the sovereignty of the individual fused into a united whole and not for the kingly discipline of God or one man rule. It believes in excursions of the mind for present benefits, not the acceptance of ready made misfits of the past.

Democracy spells honesty, sincerity of purpose and courageous defense of principal, not subterfuge, subservience to authority or pondering to popularity.

The condition faces the American voter. We women are not responsible for it.

RAINMAKERS.

The lands were parched and dry. The grass had withered and the tall corn stalks bowed their sun-browned heads and seemed to cry for moisture. The river beds showed signs of dust and the streams and springs were unmarked by even a drop of water. The farmers were in despair. The clouds refused to sprinkle their precious drops of rain on the land and rapidly the crops were becoming ruined. Rainmakers were employed without success. Every effort was seemingly exhausted when relief came and the rain fell. The village church had given a picnic.

Forgiveness is better than revenge; for forgiveness is the sign of a gentle nature, but revenge is the sign of a savage nature.

—Epictetus.

If Thou Art God

New Prayer promulgated for Universal Use
is Vastly Superior to the Old Stereotyped
Forms.

(By John Emerson Roberts.)

O, thou infinite, invisible, nameless One, whom men must name, and naming call Thee God. If thou art, why may not men know Thee as Thou art? If Thou art not, why should the thought of Thee embitter and pervert the hearts of men?

Thy worshippers are guessers, and guessing at the Divine riddle, men, like children at play, fall out and quarrel, turning happiness and joy to strife and tears.

In Thy name they have built dungeons—piled fagots and devised tortures from which life fled to the cool embrace of death, the last and only friend. They have called Thee Maker of Paradise and Hell—Thou the Infinite and have said the glory of Thy throne shone more refulgent, the music of celestial joy was sweeter for the cry of anguish and the sobs of pain which rose and reached the heartless happiness of the blest. In Thy name men have trampled into the mire the sweet earth with blood—touched with fingers of hate every nerve of pain—violated every holy human right, cursed the world with every crime, and in Thy name. Listening for Thy unspeaking voice, men have been heedless of the cry of a suffering world; reading the revelation they said was Thine, they have been blind to truth, deaf to reason and enemies of knowledge. Following Thee, they have gone astray—serving Thee they have burdened their fellowman.

Dwellers in huts have built Thy cathedrals and overlaid them with barbaric gold. Wearers of rags have woven purple and fine linen for indolent tyrants claiming to act for Thee. Priests have fattened while children cried for bread. And Thou art God. Hadst Thou been mother the cry of children had touched Thy heart. Mary's tears as she watched the death agony of the cross, were kindlier than Thy silence in the skies. Help us to forgive Thee. If Thou wouldst have thy name revered on earth, make kind and gracious those who embroider it on their garments and banish it from their hearts.

If religion is to endure among men, cast out from it the devils of hatred and clothe it with the comeliness of sanity and love. If Thy temples are to remain, open them to the light and make them hospitable to every honest thought. Since Thou art silent, may men speak modestly when they speak of Thee. Since Thou art hidden, may men not claim they see.

And if in the illimitable mysteries of life and death there be those who, seeking cannot find, pondering cannot know—who question the eternal silence in vain, who say at last Thou art not—turn not Thou from them! May honest doubt find favor in Thy sight; reason unfeared walk the earth; character be counted as salvation's very self; the noble purpose and unselfish aim be dear to Thee; virtue unblushing meet Thy searching gaze, and love, the key unlocking all the gates of joy—if Thou art God.

Moral Unfitness of Religion

To Get Full of the Holy Ghost Means the
Person Filled is also Bug-house.

(By John F. Clarke.)

One after another, the preachers come before the public and do startling stunts; things that do not agree with the public idea or right but the people are prone to overlook their misconduct.

This Rev. Coffman had a "temporary" fit of insanity following a successful revival of religion. It is claimed that a wave of crime always follows an outpouring of the Spirit of God, and Mr. Coffman's break tends to confirm the claim. Emotional religion is a phase of insanity. The man who is full of the Holy Ghost is bug-house. Dementia ecclesiastica will be the defense of this man when tried for killing his wife. Religion is a damned good thing to let alone. The world has been cursed with it since history began and is still under its baneful domination. This week is an eventful one for religion.

But three days have passed and it has had two field days. A chapel was dedicated at Annapolis, Md., upon government ground for the Naval Officers and cadets of the U. S. service.

The constitution says that no recognition of religion shall be made, but the government does not bother about Constitutional inhibitions when it desires to "graft." The Supreme Court has decided that the Roman Catholic

Church schools are entitled to receive the Indian Trust Funds held by the government. To celebrate the triumph of church over state Mr. Coffman fittingly goes on an ecclesiastical debauch and cuts his wife's throat. Surely we are blessed with a thousand hands of religion, all working for the demoralization of mankind.

A fool of a woman kept her husband's body for five days while Christian Scientists laid on holy hands in an endeavor to resurrect the remains. The corpse is still dead. As a wonderful exhibition of faith, this event in Christian Science endurance and failure is interesting, but as a cure for the disease, it is hopeless.

When C. S. takes possession of the mind it does so to the exclusion of all sense and reason, and the victim becomes as a little child or a big idiot, and therefore fit for Heaven.

Religion has so often proven its unfitness for human toleration that it is a miracle that fools enough can be found to cater to it. There is no depth in degradation that religion has not fathomed and wallowed in. There is no crime it has not committed. It appeals to the most sordid and most selfish passions in human nature and thrives upon dissimulation. It is all that it describes Hell to be and more. It deserves all the denunciation that all language can furnish and all tongues utter, and pens portray.

DAVE'S LETTER

To His Dear Heavenly Father.

NO. 4.

(Copyright applied for 1908 by Franklin H. Heald.)

My Dear Heavenly Father—What kind of water is it that comes out from under the great white thrown, where you set? Is it wholly water? Is that where the river of life gets a start? If I conclude to go there will I have to swim it? Joe says it will be easy to swim in, if we have faith. Is it thick? He says: "we will just scoot ober," but I don't believe he knows, but he thinks he does tho'. Joe is the most imaginative darkey I ever saw. He can tell exactly how you look and how everything looks up there, when he gets excited or inspired, specially if he has a dose or two of peruna or sacrament. He generally takes the Peruna before church and the sacrament after.

Were the ravens that brought meat to Eliza on the desert inspired? We have six kinds hear, that carry spoiled meat to each other. The little ones are butcher birds; the next crows; the next ravens; the next buzzards; the next vultures and the big ones are condors. A condor could carry a burro if it hadn't been dead too long. Could you inspire me if you wanted too, if I prayed? Joe says you can inspire anything you want to, but papa says you can't inspire anything that has brains in it. Was that a sure enough war in heaven or only a joke to amuse you? We have lots of pictures of it and there are lots of horses with four legs and two wings and two arms and they are riding and flying and slashing each other with soards. Do you like see people bleed? Is Roosevelt a man after your own heart? Papa says he is and will go to heaven. He says he will want to boss when he gets there and you better look out. As ever

DAVE.

FUGITIVES.

(By Julia C. Coon.)

O say, can you see, dear, a glimmer of day?

The thorns press about me so close,
My feet grow so tired of the stones by the way,

And I hear the low bay of the hounds.

O, love, be glad, for the gloom must pass,
The day e'en must follow the night,
We must press on for justice, for right and for truth,

For all mankind's sake we must fight.

O, look far ahead, can you not see a light?
My strength seems fast slipping away,
The path is so steep, and the brambles so sharp
Tell, tell me, when cometh the day?

O, love, be strong, for the morn must come,
The first rays are gleaming on us;
And the night will be passed, the long battle won,
And will rest in the dawn's soft glow.

O, take my hand, help me up the rough path,
Let me borrow of courage and strength,
Till we reach the bloom of the world's after-math,
And the nations a glad welcome ring.

That Grain of Gold

Text Taken From an Apt Saying by the Late
Robert G. Ingersoll.

(By Susan J. Peck.)

"I belong to the great church that holds the world within its starlit aisles; that finds with joy the grain of gold in every creed, and floods with light and love the germs of good in every soul."—Ingersoll.

I shall not accuse Mr. Ingersoll of alluding to material gold, for I believe that he meant the gold of truth. Aye the grain of the gold of truth! How well the creed makers understood their work against human nature with its innate longings after truth. How subtly they plotted when they scattered the few grains of truth through the creeds that they would force upon their fellow-beings. How they calculated that after the sharp conflict in which their liberties and the recognition of their right to the one natural creed of justice should be wrested from them, they would retain the creeds false though they were and for the sake of the grains of truth hidden in them. And so for nineteen hundred years the basest, the cruelest, the most degrading creed, made by sensualists and tyrants, a creed of murder, plunder, outrage and drunkenness and misnamed Christianity, has held the great majority of Europe and, for the last few centuries of this Western Hemisphere; held them in a thrall equalled only by that to which their ancestors were subjected, under the same creeds much older and called by other names; and all because of the few scattered grains of the gold of real Christianity, or, natural religion of "Love thy neighbor as thyself" and "Do unto others as ye would that they should do unto you." And so, too, one of the worst requirements of that creed, viz: war, you have accepted. War, with its last farewells spoken by pale lips above breaking hearts. War with its tragedies in every home from which a soldier goes forth to murder others, as much in slavery as is he. Tragedies in which the father presses to his breast for the last time, the little ones who have been wont to look to him for protection and whom he, in that last embrace, dares not hope to meet again. Tragedies in which young wives and mothers, looking through the vista of the coming years, cling despairingly to those for whom they left fathers, mothers, homes and all their earlier associations and with the heart breaking cry:

"How can I let you go? How can I live without you?"

Tear themselves from the encircling arms, to watch with tear dimmed eyes the receding forms, which turn and ever turn, to catch each one more glimpse, until they are lost among those other heavy hearted, gaily uniformed, husbands, fathers and brothers, so soon to march away to be made an army of murderers, each trying to be brave and think it all just.

And you, my sisters, have accepted all this; and because a few well sounding words and phrases—"Our flag," "Our country," "Our patriotism," and even the insulting ones "our rights," and "Our liberties," and in some lands, "Our king," scattered, like the few grains of gold, through the awful, the terrible creed of war, have been spoken by the wily creed makers, to lull to sleep the spirits of men and

women and make them the puppets of brutal rulers, who feast upon the blood money, when they have driven their dupes "like sheep to the slaughter." And more than that, you wives and mothers, sisters and sweethearts, have accepted this fiend's creed of war, because of the word god; forgetting that nearly all the gods were and still are wicked men; and the prayers of the chaplain; whose share of the feast is his salary; and because of the small privilege granted to you of sometime bringing home your poor starved, or, mangled dead—yes dead now, after the last shriek and the last groan have sunken into the last sigh; after the last thought of home has given place to the last dying hope.

Sometime you may bring home all that remains and place them in graves over which, you may strew flowers and weep, while you remember the last smile, the last word, or, the last letter, your own suspense now given way to the dreader certainty; and even over those graves, the chaplain says more prayers; and because you knew the right of yourselves and those who are gone, to make home and life and love and peace sacred and holy, you have mistaken your sentiments which hollowed them all with the memory of your dead, for your veneration for war and the makers of war, those blood thirsty fiends who should be known as such.

Although there is no doubt that there are exceptions, war demolishes those who escape death, or wounds; and probably few escape these and disease too; and I have heard women, the wives of veterans, say of their husbands, that they have never been the same in character since the war; something of self-respect had departed, something of manliness had gone.

After the close of our civil war, I remember having heard a mother say, that at its beginning, she had seven sons, old enough to enlist; and that mother said it with pride. Seven men whom she had given to the country as she regarded it; and I can appreciate her pride, because, she believes their cause a just one, (and so it is in every war), and also that war, is a part of the god-made destiny of the world. But oh! if she could have known that that was (like all other wars) had been for many years contemplated, (and for the revenue that it would yield to its promoters), could she have known that each approach to the ultimate end had been carefully provided for, and by men, (the only gods of war), I think that her pride would have been somewhat different.

The following quotations, from the Minneapolis Tribune, shows to what dangers the wives and families of soldiers, even army officers, are exposed, while their husbands and fathers are engaged in serving the baron, (called the lord), and other slayers of the people.

"Mrs. Mary Lawless Rorschach, wife of Lieu. Frank Rorschach, U. S. N. was murdered, in her home, * * * by an unknown burglar, early today. She was shot through the heart with her own pistol, taken from her hand by the burglar. * * * Mrs. Rorschach whose fearlessness was well known, was living, with her two children, aged seven and five years." (her only protectors)

"Her husband, Lieu. Rorschach, formerly of the United States battleship Kentucky, but now more recently promoted and transferred to the United States cruiser Tennessee, now with Admiral Evans' fleet off Provincetown, Mass., on target practice, was absent. The shots awakened the older boy, Frank, jr., and the mother cried to the boy, upstairs: 'Frank, somebody has taken my pistol and shot me. Go quickly for help.' * * * But when he returned with neighbors, his mother was dead." (A victim of war.) "An effort was made to inform Lieu. Rorschach by wireless of the tragedy. Mrs. Rorschach was a handsome woman 36 years old and one of the most accomplished musicians in Virginia. Gov. Swanson has offered a reward of \$200, for the capture of the murderer of Mrs. Rorschach. The captain of the ship was requested to break the news to the husband, who was located on board the armored cruiser Tennessee, now at the Boston navy yard. It is understood that he will be immediately relieved from duty so that he may at once go to Norfolk."

If Lieu. Rorschach had fallen on the deck of that floating palace, shot through the heart, during a battle, would his death have been called a tragedy? No. They would have called it patriotism; the patriotism that demands that a man desert wife and helpless little ones, to engage in the work of gaining glory (gold), for the money loaners and to make another vain attempt to satisfy the insatiable greed and ferocity of the savage men-gods of war. President Roosevelt is reported to have said: "A good soldier should not only be willing but anxious to fight." So apparently should some dogs and for the same cause—that their masters may win the proceeds.

What, think you, must have been in the mind of that mother, Mrs. Rorschach, while she, dying, awaited the return of her little seven-year old son? Did she remember the promise, made only a few years before by the absent husband, to "love, honor and cherish?" And what else does cherish mean but to protect? Ephesians v, 23: "For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ (the true Christ and there were and are false Christs), is the head of the church; and he is the Savior of the body." (Grain of gold.) Lieu. Rorschach was engaged in target practice (wasting your earnings and mine), that he and others might become proficient in the arts of war and that the missiles thrown from the guns with which that cruiser is armed, may fall among the homes of soldiers of other lands. And in those homes dwell families whose mental condition like that of so many in the homes of our own soldiers, may be best described in the words of the little girl, who, in explanation of her timidity said: "We are always afraid now, little brother and mama and I, afraid at night too, to go to sleep, 'cause papa is gone to the war."

President Roosevelt has spoken against race suicide and urged men who earn perhaps two, or three dollars per day, to follow each his example, (and he, a man whose income is at least, many thousands a year), and rear a large family; and that too, without consulting with the mother, which is in itself the grossest of immorality; and is the creed of the licentious, drunken tyrants, of whom we read in the old and new testaments and who ordered young women stolen for the same purpose; that brutal debauchery might furnish material for war; while the natural moral code regarding generation and which obtained before man allowed

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Current Comment on Public Events

Political expediencies have led to a system of governmental espionage over the doings of corporations and the doctrine of "publicity" has become engrafted upon political platforms. No matter what course may be pursued by either of the parties it is a self-evident fact that corporate power will continue to exist but it is a wise maxim that would bring corporations under governmental control than to have the corporations control the government. Now why could not the same doctrine apply to the church. Churches are but aggregations or combinations of individual units and it is palpable that commercial corporations have wrought less evils upon the masses than have the churches. Once a church membership conceives the notion that it would be advantageous to their institution for certain special legislation to be enacted, they at once combine in an effort to secure it. Lawmakers are sought after and specious arguments offered. These lawmakers invariably seek to play to the majority, or the seeming majority, and being naturally anxious to curry favor with any considerable element of the people the church views are acquiesced in and the legislation follows.

The suggestion is now made, and let it be known that it comes from a preacher, that churches should be subjected to government inspection, especially concerning the acquisition and expenditure of money and so the Rev. J. B. Swoyer, pastor of Point Breeze church, in Philadelphia, announces his intention of preparing and presenting a bill before the next Pennsylvania General Assembly making it obligatory upon all churches to report to the state, showing how much money has been received by each during the year, and the purposes and direction in which it has been spent.

It is also extremely gratifying to know that this same preacher is in favor of imposing a tax upon church property, and he is quoted as saying "I know of no other class of property better able to pay taxes. I don't see why a single member of a parish should want for the necessities of life while his church is worth thousands, perhaps hundreds of thousands."

That is well said and it looks as if he really meant it. If every other preacher in the country would but come to his way of thinking and speaking it would not be long before the unjust burdens imposed upon the cottage of labor would be partially removed and taxation more equalized. As for church funds being inspected by the government, that is another and different matter. If the church is a private institution organized for private good or gain, it is doubtful if the government has a right to interfere or to require them to make any report. There is such a thing as carrying government too far. On the other hand it may be true that church funds are in many instances handled in a loose manner and that even the majority of its membership does not know just how the money is spent. Greater publicity in church affairs might lead to a more speedy undoing.

The fact that Thomas Paine should be made the subject for a church sermon indicates a radical departure from the church customs

of a few years ago. To use Paine as a subject and to commend his work from a pulpit is an indication of church liberalization and it followed up will soon bring the name of that illustrious patriot more truthfully before the people.

From a clipping sent to the Blade we learn that Rev. William Thurston Brown, a Unitarian preacher of some western city, recently lauded Paine for his labors both in America and France in behalf of human liberty. It has long been the sacred duty of the clergy to couple the name of Paine with terms of hatred and reproach, and it is but a few months back since the President of this mighty republic made sneering reference to Paine by calling him 'a filthy little Atheist.' Enough criticism has been made of Roosevelt for his malicious and untruthful attack without entering further upon such a course at this time, the principal point desired to be emphasized is that with a constantly increasing humanity there is a greater feeling of charity and love in every human heart which bodes well for the future.

The crimes of preachers still keep apace with the times. With all the civilizing influence of education it seems impossible to make men, that is real men, of some preachers. It is bad enough when a preacher outrages womanhood but when passion spends its force upon a mere child the brute nature becomes supreme. From Groesbeck, Texas, comes the report that Rev. W. C. Hart, a preacher of that place, is now in jail on an exceedingly serious charge that of a criminal assault upon a young child of the tender age of 12 years, who, the report states, has become a mother. When arrested by the constable upon a warrant charging him with the offense named, this preacher was filling an appointment to preach at some near-by place, and had, doubtless, called upon the faithful to continue in the service of his dear Lord and chip in liberally to support the church. While pouring forth his crude and barbarous doctrine the child-victim of his rapacity was agonizing with pain and suffering, he scarcely giving her a single thought. No wonder the community is said to be shocked and his crime is being made the subject of much criticism and comment. No wonder the church is so incapable and ineffectual in the moral uplifting of the race. No wonder that preachers are coming more and more into contempt. What makes the crime even worse than one would suppose by a mere cursory glance at the report is the fact that the child had been an inmate of the State Orphan at Corsicana from which institution Hart had taken her to his home. Under the guise of giving her a home and covered by the cloak of religious hypocrisy, this man of God outraged the child he had morally pledged himself to protect. While we do not approve of the methods of the court of Judge Lynch, nor sanction mob violence yet this is a case, if the report be true, where one preacher less in the land would be a splendid thing.

One of the unsolved problems that appears to confront the Christian church in America, of all denominations, is the scarcity of stu-

dents for the ministry. These facts are growing more patent every day. The passing of the Andover theological seminary for lack of capable students to take the prescribed course for ministerial purposes. For some years past the Episcopal churches have complained of this lack of desire upon the part of young men to enter the ministry and the result today is that this church presents but an inferior class of preachers when compared with some of the other denominations. The Methodists have been and still are in the same dilemma. Now comes the Presbyterians who find similar cause for complaint. In the recent general assembly held at Kansas City, Rev. S. W. Sneed, of Pittsburg, plainly told his conferees that in all the land, at all the colleges now being maintained for the training of preachers for this form of faith, only 117 students could be found. Many of the members laid the blame for this upon the state colleges and universities of the country for turning the thoughts of students from religious to commercial currents. They probably forget that personal desire cuts some figure for with the abundance of training establishments for all faiths young men strive to avoid them and prefer an education in other and different lines. The only solution that was offered came from Rev. Joseph W. Cochran, of New York, who declared that it would be necessary for the Presbyterian church to either import more ministers, draw upon other denominations, or use untrained men in the pulpit.

From such facts as these we are justified in drawing the inference that the entire Christian church is in a condition of neglect from which it must ultimately sink into disuse. It is not so many years ago that young men eagerly sought the ministry because of the importance they could derive from the position. Today young men dodge the pulpit and these are healthy signs of a retrogressive movement so far as the orthodox religion is concerned.

The beneficent influences of religion, especially the Christian brand, are further demonstrated through crime. Genevieve Colome, wife of Leon Colome, a cook employed in a San Francisco hotel, while under the deleterious influences of a religious mania, shot and killed her husband in the large dining room filled with guests.

According to the published report there was no special motive for the crime. It was committed deliberately. Concealing the weapon beneath the folds of her dress, she called her husband from the kitchen and immediately shot him. Not a word was passed between them. The husband stated that his wife was insane on the subject of religion and this is the sole excuse given. Can you call that religion divine? Can there be anything that is divine about a religion that can exert such a murderous influence upon the mind of a man or woman? Inspired adultery and murder are the crowning characteristics of the Christian religion and no wonder need be expressed at the demoralizing influences it is capable of exerting. In its mildest form religion is bad enough, but in such extreme cases it affords an unanswerable argument against itself.

That people who go to church regularly each Sunday do so more from habit than from principle, it is a fact now admitted by some of the church authorities. Church attendance is a habit which priests and preachers assiduously cultivate. Beginning with the child, who is sent to Sunday School, and gradually drawn into the church, the habit becomes almost a second nature and it is difficult to overcome

it in more mature years. Early in life, before the mind has been formed, the child is saturated with the Christian superstition and the tree bends, naturally, in the direction in which the young twig is inclined.

In spite of all this there is a tendency for adults to abstain from attending church and to such an extent has this tendency grown that the churches are loudly complaining of the lack of attendance each Sunday and the evident lack of interest in religion upon the part of the masses in both England and America. Every Sunday some preacher finds it is necessary for him to hold forth upon this subject and not a few offer some suggestion as a means of increasing the attendance at his particular church. Bribes are offered. They used to employ threats, but that game won't work in these prosaic days. An estimate has been made which places fully seventy-five per cent of the people who remain away from church and many different causes for this indifference are assigned. But few seem to have discovered the real cause which is the fact that the people have had enough of religion, are sick and tired of the subject and have practically abandoned it.

According to Sebastian G. Messmer, Archbishop of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Milwaukee, the disestablishment of the church in Italy is bound to take place in the near future. This is a consummation devoutly to be wished. With France ousting the church and Italy following suit, the latter, now the home of the Vatican, will inflict a more serious blow upon the church. Bishop Messmer admits that everything now points to such an event, and is capable of realizing that the government does not occupy a friendly attitude towards the church. The growth of education in Europe is producing an anti-clerical feeling, and the innumerable hypocrisies within the church all working the freethought leaven among the masses in all Europe. It must have been a bitter pill for bishop Messmer to swallow when in a recent statement made in public he said:

"It is true that a large portion of the people of Italy seem to be drifting away from the Church, many of them into infidelity. This is due to two causes—first, to the fact that the universities and higher institutions of learning are all in the hands of the government. Infidels are appointed to the professorships, and the works of the German philosophers tending to infidelity are translated into Italian and taught in these institutions. Thus, infidelity is sown broadcast among the upper classes.

Without knowing it or realizing it, perhaps, this priest has placed education as a correlative of infidelity and practically admits that the orthodox religion can flourish best only where ignorance prevails. Nor will an extended religious instruction avail the church because the character of instruction implied thereby does not make for the progress that marks the age in which we are living. When we consider the further fact that the Pope cannot appoint a bishop today, save in some of the old Roman states, without the consent and approval of the government, we may perceive that this church is no longer able to dictate but is dictated to. There can be no doubt about the unfriendliness of the Italian government towards the church and the government has good and sufficient cause to be unfriendly. The church has never aided the government save when it could aid itself by so-doing. Experience has taught even governments that a church power, solid and influential, within its jurisdiction, is an unmixed evil and one by one restrictions are placed

upon the church and its power curbed. Naturally enough the preachers make a kick but it is worse than useless. Let disestablishment come and may the day that brings it be hastened in its dawning.

Instructive figures, showing the apathy of the people towards the church, are contained in the report of the Manchester City Mission, submitted to the annual meeting.

In six districts of the city details were obtained concerning 20 streets, totalling 605 houses. Taking one representative from each house, 139 claimed to attend a place of worship, 382 stated that "they never go anywhere," and 84 claimed a nominal adherence to church or chapel, but owned that they did not go.

In another district, out of 75 houses tenanted by "Protestants" only six professed to attend a place of worship. In some localities the average was one in ten; at best it was one in four or five.

Seventy-five per cent of the people, therefore, do not attend worship, while the claim of attachment to some place, made by many for the sake of respectability, will be found on examination (says the report) to be no index as to the facts of the case.

Frequently on inquiry it is discovered that they have not been for six or seven years in many cases and not since marriage; the husband gave it up when he left Sunday school, and the woman claims that it is impossible to go on account of having the children to see to, or, as one woman bluntly expressed it, "Good Heavens, man! I've got enough to do to k after the kids."

That Pittsburg preacher denies that he refused to accept \$100 in "mottoless" gold from his congregation. He offers as proof of the denial the fact that no money was offered him.

THE PERFECTION OF GOD.

Well Written Article on a Deep Subject From a Fifteen Year Old Lad.

(By Joe B. Thorn.)

For the sake of a mere experiment let us borrow the time machine of H. S. Wells and travel backward if we can, far into the past.

Were it possible for us to gaze upon the earth from a distance we would behold an enormous body, probably twice its present size, completely enveloped in flame, with an abundance of oxygen and hydrogen that have not been forced off the surface by chemical or mechanical action.

Still travelling we observe the two elements named in a more condensed form, and we perceive they have now formed water. The water and the land were not divided then as they are now but the land overlapped the water and the water overlapped the land. In other words the combination wrought was simply a shallow, muddy sea, extending from pole to pole, for be it known there were no mountains in those days.

Now the question arises, how did life first originate? Life is but the natural evolution of a body supplied with proper elements. In passing from a heated state into a cold state there was no life for there could be none.

We will not stop our machine at every station but turn the cranks and push rapidly on until we reach the monkey-man epoch. The first man noticed the movements of the sun and stars; he saw the lightning and heard the thunder; he saw the ceaseless movements of rivers and seas; he saw volcanoes in eruption, and from these phenomena the man-god epoch came to be. From these terrestrial, solar and

stellar experiences man drew the forces, those notions, from which he created god. In other words, simpler, perhaps, everything this early bird failed to understand he converted into a god, and what he did know could have been put into a capsule.

Each of these gods had a separate function to perform, but every darn one of them took it out of the poor little monkey-man, who had created them and was unable to defend himself against them. In a few years he began to understand things a little better and he began to get rid of his gods one by one. During the days of Hellenic civilization man was blessed, or cursed, with over 2,000 gods.

The Hebrews were perhaps the first to show a little common sense. They got awful tired of so many cranky gods and narrowed their vision down to but one. In making this unitarian selection they donated to him the possession of absolute power, not knowing or caring how he would use it. He was a sour, sometimes, a just god, but was extremely jealous. He enjoyed himself by busting the banking institutions of the Jews and appropriating their savings by sending either an Egyptian or Assyrian army down upon them. In this manner the Jewish god was getting perfected day by day. Later the Hebrews gave him to the Greeks, but the strangest part of this affair is that the Hebrews had just as much left. This god grew jealous toward the people for eating hog-meat because he liked it better as a burnt offering.

When god had monopolized Israel he turned his attention to a few other countries but didn't succeed in crossing the Atlantic until Columbus showed him the way. Maybe he could have done it if he wanted to but was afraid of the redskins. I do not blame him either for not coming all by his lonesome and converting Indians.

God seemed to take an especial delight in watching people blow out each other's brains ever since he allowed a monk to invent gunpowder. Before that he had the people use bows and arrows. He also burnt San Francisco and allowed the heathen Japanese whip the Christian Russians and is now looking for another scrap like that somewhere.

Here, then, we have the people's great god! He is selfish, unjust and cruel. Instead of fixing up home missions for his people he visits foreign lands and it maybe that he has got all the followers he can here as the army of freethought is steadily advancing. If we can run him and his missionaries abroad, why can we not run them to the moon? But let us not be too hard on the Christians for they are modifying him that after a while we can accept him. Until that time comes let us await the perfection of god.

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FREETHOUGHT, ORTHODOXY AND
SOCIALISM.

All Freethinkers are not Socialists.

All Socialists are not Freethinkers.

Freethought is a protest against an arbitrary religious authority in matters of government.

Socialism is a protest against economic wrongs inflicted upon the masses through the avenues of government.

Neither work upon precisely the same lines but both had their origin in outrage. The one religious, the other political. In the course of investigation the Socialist found that much of the injustice along economic lines had its origin in religious authority and, as a result, the Socialist soon discovered that to attain his ideals he was compelled to work and labor outside of and against the orthodox church. The latter institution offered him no encouragement, afforded him no hope, for its doctrines of obedience and self-abnegation did not harmonize with his own notions of right. On the other hand the Freethinker became convinced that no true, or lasting political or economic reform can obtain until the church has been completely driven out of politics and its influence entirely destroyed.

Under such conditions it is not at all surprising that as a political factor, the church authority is on a rapid decline. The sincere Socialist cannot remain in the church. To such an extent is this fact becom-

ing both recognized and admitted that serious alarm is being felt by all the church authorities in Europe over the growth of secularism and what is deemed to be a wholesale neglect of Christian worship. The clergy attribute the existing and continuing defections to the widely spreading doctrines of scientific agnosticism and the influence of Socialism. In this both secularism and socialism are held to be joint factors and there is considerable of truth in the idea for both are so closely allied in their causes and effects. The Socialist, however, prefers to confine his efforts at immediate economic reform. The Freethinkers realizes that no reform is possible while the church is capable of wielding any political authority and the latter prefers to concentrate his efforts upon the destruction of theology and all that it implies to the end that a peaceful evolution will ultimately lead to the redemption of society and its reconstruction upon a sounder basis than at present, with the consequent happiness of the race.

In Germany, where Socialism has acquired great political proportions, the clergy are looked upon as a sort of "black police" and the church is regarded as an institution of stultification against which war must be waged sooner or later. In France, it is reported, that upon a recent public occasion the president refused to enter Notre Dame, and in a letter written from Vienna, and published in a Parisian journal, he expressed his belief that if Catholicism was not already dead, it was, at least, dying in his native land. Following this comes the official announcement that in spite of growth in population the evangelical church in Germany suffered from 12,000 defections in 1906 and that last year, in the city of Berlin, alone, 4,000 people severed their connection with the church and its membership was that much less as the figures are given over and above all admissions.

These secessions is the penalty the church has got to pay for her neglect of the public welfare, of her selfish system of self-aggrandizement, caring naught for the condition of the people. The same results will ultimately obtain in America. The tendency of the church authorities to interfere in affairs of political importance to the detriment and positive injury of the people must culminate in popular contempt and when that day comes the church will be shorn of all power.

Under such conditions there is every reason why the aggressive Socialist and the aggressive Freethinker, though not agreeing on all things, should not labor together for the ultimate triumph of both. The attitude of the church towards Socialism should be

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enough to convince its most enthusiastic supporter that its power must be taken from it before any sure enough reform can be won. That the church does exercise a power and influence over the government is a fact too plain to allow of any denial. Witness the haste and readiness with which Congress played right into the hands of the church power by restoring the hypocritical lie upon the coin of the realm in order to stand good with their constituents. No Free-thinker should vote for any member of that congress to succeed himself and if his defeat can be accomplished through this then let him know just how it all happened. Political appointments are yet made with a view to placating this or that sect, provided it can boast a large and influential membership, and when the Socialist begins to realize these facts, and understand their force and meaning, he will come to the conclusion that the Freethinker is correct in his views and lend his support in overthrowing the system.

Whatever virtue there may exist in Socialism it can never be won until the church power has been destroyed. The success of Socialism must lead to the destruction of the church. The church is a stumbling block in the path of all progress. It belongs to the past and is not in harmony with the present.

Let us quote:—

“Socialism nor any ism for the benefit of humanity can never come until the power of the church and god-superstition is destroyed.

“Hence economic freedom can never come as long as the minds of the people are enslaved with god and heaven superstitions.”

This paragraph comes from the People's Press of Chicago, and is so appropos to our own ideas upon this important subject that we reproduce it approvingly to show that others agree with us thereon.

From time to time the Blade has laid particular emphasis upon the fact that it is practically impossible to win and retain the slightest modicum of reformatory progress until the church power in public affairs has either been destroyed or its influence weakened to the extent that it is incapable of making itself felt.

The church has ever been a reactionary. The church has invariably undertook to give its support to the established order of things. In its politics, as in its theological professions, it has stubbornly fought against any change, realizing that thought transitions are dangerous to the perpetuity of so-called divine institutions. The only change the church would ever tolerate were such as were calculated to increase its power and influence and, incidentally, to increase its revenues. Every political tyrant was held to be of

divine ordination until political intrigue turned against the church itself. The priests and preachers of all religions must live, somehow, and being non-producers they must find a sustenance upon the fruits of another's labor, and the church system is admirably adapted to the purpose of extracting a full share of the world's wealth without expending any effort toward its production. Any change from the established order tended to injure the church. For these reasons the church opposed change. The church seeks to keep its adherents in that frame of mind wherein the individual will sink all moral and social improvements into an attitude of subserviency as compared with issue of the church itself.

It is not assuming too much to say that every social reformer is capable of fully realizing the truth of the position here stated. Then the wonder is that pronounced advocates of social reform, as shown by the reports of the recent Socialist convention at Chicago, should be fearful lest they be recognized as openly offering an antagonism to the church and its multifarious phases of religious belief.

The reports given of that convention indicate that the warmest sort of a discussion took place between the various elements composing it. We have previously stated that some Freethinkers are Socialists and some are not, others being indifferent. It is also true that some Socialists are Freethinkers, while other Socialists are still adherents to one or another of the denominational manifestations of Christianity. There can be no doubt, or question, that as a whole, the Socialist party stands opposed to church activity in politics. This fact is readily admitted by all factions. Such an admission makes the Christian-Socialist an anomaly. If church activity in politics is admittedly pernicious, productive of evil, or a subversion of the true principles of popular self-government, then the truth of the position above stated must be taken as confessed.

Orthodoxy is not merely a question of private conscience, as some of the Socialist debaters appear to infer. It is something more. For centuries it has been an applied force and the application has been derogatory to the best interests of the masses. Just so long as orthodox Christianity ruled supreme, either by its priests, in person, or through kings, by proxy, every new idea of reform was denounced as a sinful revolt against the authorities that had been divinely instituted and ordained. As orthodoxy cannot change without becoming heterodox, so will it be an utter impossibility for Socialism to make any great headway until the power of orthodoxy has been broken and destroyed.

Fully realizing this great truth the Blade has elected to concentrate its efforts towards the eradication of Christianity in particular, and all religious systems, in general. To this extent must it pursue a destructive policy. The seas must be cleared of pirates before commerce can be made secure. Every retrograde influence must be weeded out of our political system before reform can ever obtain a sure foothold. Just as this labor is made necessary in the interest of every worthy reform movement, then to the end that it may be successful all reformers can afford to take part in it.

Socialism may not be concerned with religious beliefs, as some of its convention delegates assert, but the Socialists cannot be blind to the fact that religious beliefs have been, and are yet, mightily concerned with Socialism.

PREACHERS BLUE MONDAY.

According to an article which appeared in the Literary Digest of the issue of June 13, the preachers of America are in a permanent condition of Blue Monday. This looks like retribution and, in a measure, is compensatory, for having so long inflicted upon a suffering people what has been known as Blue Sunday. In any event it is a reckoning upon which they had not probably counted, for with the appearance of Blue Monday we can discern the disappearance of the Blue Sunday. Thus, after all, there is hope for the masses, and the day of public judgment is not yet.

The most cheering part of the article, that is so far as Freethinkers can be concerned, is that which suggests that, "nine-tenths of the preachers are discouraged; that the great majority of pastors are practically hopeless of accomplishing anything worth while; that they are restless and discontented; that they heartily wish they had never entered the ministry."

It is almost too good to be true, but as the author of these statements is declared to be a preacher himself, and should be in a position to know considerable of that concerning which he speaks, we are justified in assuming that the principal cause of such a condition of affairs is the continued hammering upon theology by the higher critics, the continued assaults made upon orthodoxy by Freethought, and the more beneficent teachings of modern science.

One of the greatest difficulties in the way of the clergy is the fact that the people of this age know too much for them. Education has worked the wrong way for the church. Instead of leading the mind of humanity toward god it has led the multitude from

god and this means a loss of prestige to the church and a decrease in the social standing of the preacher. No wonder they get restless and discontented for they can see innumerable of their prerogatives slipping from their grasp.

Some of the preachers are not inclined to agree with him and they have entered mild protests against what he has had to say. They simply remind us of the boy who whistled to keep his courage while in the dark. There is not a preacher of any pretension to any intelligence in the country, who can avoid seeing, knowing and realizing the conditions that surround them as a class. Have they not, already, made a tabulation of the reasons why young men do not enter the ministry, and are not the conditions here suggested one of the reasons assigned in the tabulation? Furthermore, this is not a mere temporary depression, one that suddenly steals across without invitation. It is permanent, impressive and binding. It is based upon actual facts, and, as a rule, preachers are averse to facts. All classes of men, no matter their occupation or profession, may have to encounter trials, but these trials of the clergy come from a mental disregard of their shibboleths, their creeds and their profession as a means of directing the human mind and consequent action.

We may go even further and point to the editorial utterances of our great dailies; to the powerful pleadings in court of some great lawyer. Editorial utterances are no longer capable of directing the political action of the people, leading them into this or that party like so many sheep, because the people have begun to think for themselves. Legal orators are no longer able to sway the minds of jurors by impassioned utterances to the end that they can induce the juries to do things and render verdicts against their own feelings after hearing the law and the facts in the case, for jurors are growing in wisdom and understanding and in these days have a mind of their own and are capable of exerting it.

To what do these facts point? Clearly to the rising power of the people. Then just as the editors of dailies and just as leading lawyers are incapable of swaying the public mind against its will, so are the preachers even more powerless to control the people through theology and its innumerable non-essentials that have been foisted upon them through all the centuries of Christian faith.

The day, the hour, the minute of social, political and religious deliverance is at hand. Every light that comes from intelligence points to a clearer and better way. Popular triumph is the death of priestcraft and political tyranny. Then is our work not hopeless. In

the same inverse proportion as the preachers get without hope and become restless and dissatisfied, so do the hosts of Freethought take on a new hope and a greater determination to succeed enervates them.

CHURCH SEPARATION IN MEXICO.

Church antagonism is coming nearer and nearer to our very doors and if one is permitted to express an opinion in the light of current events the recent separatist movement in France appears to be becoming epidemic and rapidly spreading to other governments.

According to recent authentic reports the Government of Mexico, for many years under the practical domination of the Roman Catholic church, through its properly constituted authorities, has issued an order directed to all the heads of churches in the republic requiring them to make out an inventory of their property, real, personal and mixed, held and owned in the name of the church, and to immediately thereafter make a report upon the same to the official head of the republic.

Experience with Mexico, the Mexican people, and the church, induces no small degree of wonder and astonishment at such a procedure, and whether the order be in mere imitation of France, or independent of such outside influences, as is charged, it is certainly a step in the right direction and our neighboring republic should be congratulated by the free and independent people of America for their courage and wisdom in making such a move. Could many of our American people witness a church meeting in some of the remote villages of Mexico, and there see the combinations of ignorance in both clergy and laity, see them grovelling in the dust at the church doors, the priest on the inside swinging incense pots and muttering prayers in Latin which the people are unable to understand and which it was never intended they should understand. Could our free people, those who are independent of all church influences, witness the methods in vogue and realize what they mean, for the extortion of money from these ignorant Mexican peoples, they, like the civil authorities could understand the full drift of the church in that country.

With such awful power it is no wonder that the church could erect magnificent edifices of marble and gold, extravagant almost beyond human conception, and, in the course of time, it is no wonder that the church should grow richer and more powerful than the government itself. The thousands of priests in Mexico exerting their influence upon the public mind, created a condition of affairs wherein the church

exercised a far greater public control than the government itself. Can any one doubt that the government was unable to perceive the tendency of the church towards public control? Then under such circumstances it was but the natural and logical outcome for the government to resort to such measures for its own protection.

Of still deeper significance is the meaning given to the order which carries with it the presumption that all the property under the control of the church is public property, that it is simply being held in trust by the church for the benefit and in the name of the Republic. Under such a construction it is but the inevitable bent that the trustees should be required to make due report upon how they had executed their trust, and it is in precisely such a light that the government of Mexico views the present situation. Conditions in Mexico were, and are now, worse than they were in France just prior to the Separation and such action must soon be taken by all countries where the church makes any claim to exercise power over the mind and actions of the people.

The claim made that these edifices were built by the church with its own money, as some American apologists are asserting, is not altogether true. As a matter of fact the church had no money save what it obtained from the people. It has been able to accumulate wealth at an alarming rate. The same is true of this country and unless checked in time, it will not be long before the church has grown to such proportions as to be a distinct danger and a menace to the government.

The Blade has been put in excellent company. Voltaire was wrong, Paine was wrong, Bradlaugh was wrong, Watts was wrong, Putnam was wrong, Ingersoll was wrong. These are of the past. Haeckel is wrong, Remsburg is wrong, and the Blade's editor is wrong. W. H. Kerr, of Great Bend, Kan., alone is right. This sounds very much like beating time on a bass drum to a bull-frog duet, or mounting some gray goose as a pegasus and soaring to the sun, only to be pitched headlong into Icarian seas.

The Puritans persecuted because they were, as a rule, ignorant men, but modern orthodox professors persecute solely with a view to political power and pecuniary profit.

Big times are anticipated when the double Freethought convention takes place at Canal Dover, Ohio, in September this year.

Correspondence School

PROSPECTUS.

School will open September 1, 1908, with twenty, or more students enrolled. On or before that date each student will receive the primary course of examination questions, blanks and such instructions as may be necessary to assist in an investigation of the subjects given.

SUBJECTS TREATED.

Four of the principal branches of natural science will be studied during the first year's course. These include the following:

Astronomy—As showing the origin of the earth together with other planetary bodies whereby the student can draw comparisons between the subject treated and theological representations.

Geology—As showing the earth's great history, its formation, composition, change, decay, repair and waste, a science that completely upsets the biblical cosmogony.

Zoology—As showing the history of animal life upon the earth from the earliest times of which any records are known down to the present, giving a general and gradual growth from protoplasm to man, with all intermediate types, demonstrating one common origin.

Botany—As showing the origin and development of plant life, its importance in the material world, structure, means of reproduction and specie.

The four subjects named, once fully understood, will convince the student that our earth is not what the church is teaching it is and enables the student to grasp the principles under which nature produces all phenomena, which we call life, or existence.

TEXT-BOOKS.

Arrangements have been made with the Macmillan Publishing Company of Chicago, for a series of cheap text-books recommended for use by students in the Correspondence School. These books may be ordered through the Blade, or directly from the Macmillan Company. While these arrangements for a slight reduction in cost have been made it is for the benefit of the student and the Blade does not wish to make any profit upon their sale. For this reason the orders may be sent in as the student desires. Following are the text-books:

Geology—Elementary Geology, by Ralph S. Tarr, Professor of Dynamic geology at Cornell University. 500 pages. Illustrated. Price \$1.40.

Zoology—Introduction to Zoology by Charles B. Davenport, Professor of Zoology in the University of Chicago, Director of the Biological Laboratory. 412 pages. Illustrated. Price \$1.10.

Astronomy—Introduction to astronomy by Forest R. Moulton, assistant Professor of Astronomy at the Chicago University. 560 pages. Illustrated. Price \$1.60.

Botany—Elementary text-book of Botany by

L. H. Bailey, Director of the College of Agriculture, Cornell University. 355 pages. Illustrated. Price \$1.10.

As previously stated, the examination questions have been made up with a view of permitting the student to use any standard work on the subjects named, it is, however, recommended that they use the list given above as being better adapted to modern demands. Questions will be made up with a view of per-number of text-books.

From the foregoing list it will be seen that the total cost of the four text-books will be \$5.20. Students, however, by ordering through the school can secure them at a reduction of 20 per cent, according to an agreement made with the publishers. This will bring the actual cost of the four books to about \$4.00.

TUITION.

The tuition fee for each student will be \$10 for one year's course; \$25 for three year's course, payable in advance. The full course comprises a study extending over three years at the end of which a Certificate of Merit and Award will be issued to those securing a grading of 75 per cent, or more.

SCHOLARSHIPS.

The Scholarship Certificate, a copy of which has already appeared in the Blade, will be issued upon payment of the tuition fee for the period designated. These Scholarships are transferable and may be purchased by one person for the benefit, in tuition, for another.

TERMS OF STUDY.

These terms will extend for a full period of nine months in each year. The term begins September 1, 1908 and terminates June 1, 1909. The final examinations must be in by June 10. Awards will be made July 1st following.

EFFECT OF PLAN.

One of the most potent and important effects of the Correspondence School plan is to bring a university education to your own homes without the cost and expense of attending the institution itself. All studies will be arranged, passed upon and guided by the Instructor.

EXAMINATIONS.

The studies are conducted in the form of monthly examinations and each examination will cover a list of twenty questions in each subject. They can all be carried together by taking them alternately until the field in each as suggested by the questions has been covered. The examination questions for each month will reach the student before the first of each and every month during the course and the answers, in writing, must be in the office of the School not later than the 10th day of the month following thereafter. If any corrections are needed the Instructor will make them and send on to the student.

MANAGEMENT.

The School will be conducted under the auspices of the Blue Grass Blade which will also be used as a school journal. From time to time the workings and progress of the School will be given in its columns that students may know in a general way what each are doing.

John R. Charlesworth, the Blade's Editor will conduct the school, formulating the examination questions each month and pass upon all answers made.

James E. Hughes, the Blade's Manager and Publisher, will attend to all the business details connected with the college.

Examinations should be addressed to the former and all business communications to the latter.

Address 126 North Limestone Street, Lexington, Ky.

FACTS WORTH KNOWING.

(By J. Frantz.)

The material for a man weighing 150 pounds can be found in the white and yolks of 1203 hens' eggs.

Reduced to a fluid the average man would yield .98 cubic metres of illuminating gas and hydrogen enough to fill a balloon capable of lifting 155 pounds.

The normal human body has in it the iron needed to make seven large nails, the fat for 14 pounds of candles, the carbon for 64 gross of crayons and the phosphorus for 820,000 matches.

Out of a normal human body may be obtained 20 large spoons of salt 50 lumps of sugar and 40 quarts of water.

A man will die for want of air in 5 minutes; for want of water in a week; for want of sleep in ten days; for want of food, at varying intervals, dependent on various circumstances.

Our sun is about 866,500 miles in diameter, or 109½ times the size of the earth.

If a railway were built to the sun, and trains upon it were run at the rate of 42 miles an hour, day and night, without stop, it would require 255 years to make the journey from the earth to the sun.

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THAT GRAIN OF GOLD.

(Continued from page 5.)

priests and kings to rob him of the exercise of his rights to obey his conscience, required, that each and every child born, should be the answer to hope, a prayer, within the heart and soul of both beings who were become responsible for that little ones advent into life. For they, our remote ancestors (and they did not originate in Eden), understood that each member, each organ of the body, was given by nature's god within nature, for a purpose; the eyes for seeing, the ears for hearing, the lungs for breathing, and the organs of generation for generation only and they never for one moment entertained the thought of employing them with any other object in view. Let us friends return to the natural morality of our early ancestors and make marriage the holy relationship that they made it; and let us be brave enough to live the truth and to teach the truth to our children, both by precept and example. Let us be honest with ourselves and them and then, shall we bring heaven to earth and the reign of the only true christ conscience, the rule of the only true god, honesty. Then only shall we know the truth and the truth shall make us free.

Mr. Roosevelt first advise men to be good moral citizens (another grain of gold), and then would educate them to be soldiers; and regarding race suicide, what surer means could be employed for its accomplishment, than the practice of demanding and accepting only the healthiest and strongest men for war, leaving only the weakest to be propagators of the race?

RUSKIN ON CLASSES.

When we get at the bottom of the matter, we find the inhabitants of this earth broadly divided into great masses—the peasant paymasters, spade in hand, the original and imperial producers of turnips, and, waiting on them all round, a crowd of polite persons, modestly expectant of turnips, for some—too often theoretical—service. There is first the clerical person, whom the peasant pays in turnips for giving his moral advice; then the legal person whom the peasant pays in turnips for telling him, in black letter, that his house is his own; there is thirdly the courtly person, whom the peasant pays in turnips for presenting a celestial appearance to him; there is fourthly the literary person, whom the peasant pays in turnips for talking daintily to him; and there is lastly the military person, whom the peasant pays in turnips for standing with a cocked hat on, in the middle of the field, and exercising a moral influence upon the neighbors.—John Ruskin.

WORLDLY CHRISTIANITY.

An advertisement in one of the religious papers offers opportunity to a Christian lady to take entire charge of four children and their wardrobe, to wash them and their linen, and teach them music, singing, and the rudiments of English, for a salary, "if suitable," of "twelve pounds per annum."

It is further stipulated that applicants must be Dissenters, and one hopes the advertiser will find them so. On the terms offered the most heathenish of nigger slaves surely should turn Protestant.

The Blade's Correspondence

STILL THEY COME!

If there must be fight let it come, too!

Read over the letters that follow and then judge of the Blade's standing among the Freethinkers of America!

If any Freethought paper had reason to feel proud of the heroism of its constituency, the Blade ought to entertain such feelings:—

Freethought Editor Joins.

LOS ANGELES, CAL.—I notice your fears of prosecution by the Government. Put me down for \$25. if you need it, as the Blade must not be suppressed.

I will also send a \$2.50 copy of The Progression of Planets to each member of the correspondence school, if they do not already have one, if they will send me postage (10c).—F. H. HEALD.

Short and Sweet.

WILMINGTON, N. C.—I pledge you \$5 for the fight to get the paper through the mail.—LEGER MEYER.

Until the End.

GARLINGTON, OKLA.—Last issue I see the cloud of cruel Christianity in the attempt to exclude from the mails your valuable paper, and the request you make upon all lovers of free speech to state what assistance will pledge you in the courts. Put me down for \$5.00 and more if possible. Malice is bad but good people should hate such movements like snakes. Arouse ye Freethinkers! Die if necessary!—E. H. MIZER.

California Chips in.

IONE, CAL.—You can count me on for \$5.00 if you have to fight the post-office department.—H. DUTSCHKE.

More, If Necessary.

BRULE S. D.—You can count on me for \$5.00 if it should be necessary to fight for Blade. Will get some more for you if necessary.—L. H. WILLRODT.

A Woman to the Rescue.

EAST LYNNE, MO.—In defense of the Blade (as present indications are) you may put me down for five dollars. I enclose stamps for Mrs. Henry's "Bible Revision."—EMILY C. JONES.

From the Lone Star State.

WHITESBORO, TEXAS.—I see you'r in the same boat with the Appeal to Reason, and should the postal authorities get after you, draw on me for five dollars when needed. First National Bank, Whitesboro, Texas.—FRANCIS REAST.

From the Chaplain.

The Blade is interesting reading. May 31st—"Religious Liberty Threa'ened." That is no news to those who have kept run of Jesuitism

in this country for many years. The press of the U. S. is centured by Rome with headquarters in Washington. With the tools of Rome in every department of our government and a fourth rate San Francisco lawyer on the Supreme Bench—and two more I think. I don't see how you are going to make anything in the event of a holdup by going to law. Moses Harmon will smile when he reads this issue. The liberties of the people are slowly but surely being taken from them by LAW.

The time will come in this country when those who love liberty of thought and freedom of press will be comuelled in self preservation to spend their coin for a gun in place of a lawyer. A study of all the celebrated cases in late years will convince any deep thinker how useless it is in our present government to employ lawyers. I said years ago when Editor Price was fighting Rome here and went to prison for it, that t'e time would come when they would attempt to suppress all Freethought literature and with a little more power Rome will do the trick. Even now the highest Masonary in "New Age" calls on Masonary to look out for Rome. Few men care when others are in prison, it is only when they are there that the shoe pinches. If the gun argument in the present state of Rome control is not better than the law argument. "Show me."—ALBERT JOHNSON, the Chaplain.

Some Truths Plainly Told.

WITHEE, WIS.—Enclosed please find express money order for \$3. for which please credit my subscription to the Blade. Will send some more in July. I see the critics differ on all points; keep the name Blue Grass Blade as long as it is published. The name is both unique and catchy. You might be a little closer on proof reading. As for the Correspondence School I don't know of anything that has been suggested that will advance our cause as the school. Mr. A. B. Bennett says fill the field with lecturers; where can you get them, where are the Ingersolls, they are not alive; if 500 bright young people graduate from that school 250 of them will take the lecture platform. Suppose Miss Buckholtz was a graduate, my guess is she would soon prove a power in the lecture field. It takes us old fellows that was brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord so long to get rid of the moss that preachers planted on us that we are old and gray before we are aware of it. I am 71 years old.—J. C. MOODY.

One More From the West.

LOS ANGELES CAL.—If it comes to a fight whether the dear old Blade shall be denied being sent through the mails and you can put me down for five dollars to help fight the battle I am old and have no way of making money or I would give more hoping that the Blade will pull through all right.—L. W. FOWLER.

Another Woman Writes

BLUE EARTH MINN.—Last evening I read in the Blade of May 31st that the authorities want to make a hot time for you, and not only you, but for all who say a word against their cursed religion.

Now if there is one mean thing I hate most, it is the foolishness of christianity. It is plain to see that orthodoxy is dying hard, just like a snake dies when hacked with a hoe. I like one about as well as I do the other, of the two the snake is the best, even if he is a ratler.

I will pledge myself to give five dollars to help in carrying on a contest, if it should finally come to that.

Wish I were able to give much more, but am poor.

I prize the pictures on each paper, and shall put my papers into bindings, about twenty numbers to a book.—MRS. M. A. LEE.

Strong, But It's True.

McCOY, OREGON.—I note with concern, the attack of the Rev. W. F. Craft's and his organization to invade and to destroy the rights of a free press, and free speech. I have information that this same professional congressional lobbyist of many years past against the natural and constitutional rights of American citizens, was the instigator of the infamous "Penrose Bill" and later the same exclusion tacked on to the general appropriation bill by Congress, appealing to the capitalistic and trust interests of the ruling class to crush out Socialist propaganda and especially the Appeal to Reason published at Girard, Kansas having arrested Fred D. Warren, its editor, under U. S. Grand Jury procured indictments for publishing in the Appeal to Reason a reward for the arrest and return to the State of Kentucky of ex-Gov. Taylor a Republican capitalist whose hands are soiled with the red blood of Gov.-elect Goble and so charged by a regularly impaneled Grand Jury of his former State, Kentucky. I did not fail to note that just seven days after this redhanded murderer fled from the state of his crime into Indiana that he was carried on the arms of delegates to the platform in the hall of the Republican State Convention at Indianapolis and there given an ovation as a hero. Also I did not fail to note that this same arch capitalist criminal was a delegate at large to the Republican National Convention in 1900 at Philadelphia and that he was guaranteed protection by the capitalist Governors of four states through which he was transported to this convention and among the number of capitalist Governors so affording protection was our blatant trust buster seeking out "undesirable citizens." T. R. Roosevelt of Chicago and Alton fame and of Harriman campaign funds. Well, I am compelled to put up good money to defend Warren and the Appeal. In doing this I am defending your rights, now menaced. To the same end I now cheerfully pledge say \$20 to the Blade defense fund. Let us fight this tyranny and Czarism to the death. These twin relics of the barbarous past Imperial Plutocracy and Ecclesiasticism. They are ever and always allied together against human rights. Let's fight to the end.—JAMES R. SEARS.

Willing to Chip In.

NEW HAVEN, CONN.—I note your article in last issue in reference to your possible approaching trouble through a threatened investigation by the Postal Department officials, though I cannot believe any serious trouble could come to you by such an

investigation it is doubtless well to be prepared for such a contingency. While I am not in a position to pledge any definite amount I will do to the full extent of my ability for your support should the necessity arise.

You doubtless have quite a number of subscribers in this city, I would like to put myself in communication with them with the object in view of forming a Freethought Association and put ourselves in a position to give you substantial support should you be seriously attacked, we could increase our power more than tenfold by such corporation.

I think most people have a misconception of the principles and purpose of Freethinkers as being devoted exclusively to religious questions. This is a serious error and should be corrected; the Freethinker is, or should be, devoted to discovering the truth as to all things as far as is possible; there are many questions, political, social, industrial and financial as well as religious that challenges the attention of Freethought, the mind must be free and unshackled from preconceived ideas or we never can be sure of arriving at the truth.

"Great is truth and mighty above all things."
—H. H. LANE.

Ready When Needed.

AUGUSTA, MICH.—The May 31st issue of the Blade containing your tocsin of alarm from the postal autocrats, is at hand. I hope you have magnified a mole hill into a mountain. If you have kept the sex questions quite out of sight, so you are not denied the mails on the obscenity plea. I do not see on what grounds the autocrats could deny the mailing of the Blade. It will be a job to make blasphemy simply a reason for denial and the postal people will never try that. If trouble comes, it is the true duty of every man, who has an ounce of liberal blood in his body to put his shoulder to the wheel and help in the cause of freedom. Our servants are over zealous for our great welfare and have many fears that we, the people who made them, may go wrong, in religion especially. I, for one am willing to help the victims of superstition so far as my conditions allow, at all times. You can count on me for a small amount if this presaging storm strikes you. But as I said before, I hope it will pass you by. Obscenity is the great morsel of delight, that these, our servant autocrats, love to have for a plea to deny the mails, and open the prison doors.—F. B. HALL.

Gives \$10 and More.

MARIETTA, O.—I see you are threatened again by one of Uncle Sam's P. O. Inspectors for something that has appeared in a former issue of the Blade. Oh, man, will this persecution ever stop, or has every brave man got to be martyred for opinions sake? Can we speak of this as an age of progress, when we are arrested, tried and sent to prison for no other crime than telling the truth? This is something fearful to think of. When a set of loyal, law-abiding citizens, as the Blue Grass Blade represents that she has to stand trial before the U. S. Court to defend their rights as American citizens, and in the end suffer as did the Blade's former editor, the Honorable C. C. Moore. This matter should hasten every lover of freedom to your aid. You should be given the most loyal support at our command and carry this matter to the highest courts of our land, and settle this unfair, unequal, unjust discrimination, once and for all time to come.

Brother Hughes, I could write a book on this subject, but it is not necessary, therefore

I shall close. If you are brought to trial you can draw on me for \$10. and if this is not enough you can come again.—WM. H. COX.

SOME DEFINITIONS.

The schoolboy who was asked to write a description of "The Angelus," the well known picture, did so in a way simple, natural and free from the learned pose of the critic. "There's a young man and a young woman digging mealies," he wrote, "and the six o'clock whistle went and they quit." The charming brevity of this almost rivals that of the small scholar who described Henry VIII. as a "great widower."

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Voltaire was the precursor of a new civilization. As much credit must be given him as any man in all history for the permanent establishment of this great American Republic. There is scarcely any successful reform movement, among the many to the credit of the nineteenth century, which was not either originated or pioneered by Voltaire.

Voltaire will always be regarded as
the greatest man in literature, of modern
times, and perhaps even of all times.

—GORTHE

Atheism and fanaticism are the two
poles of a universe of confusion and horror.
The narrow zone of virtue is between
those two. March with a firm step in that
path; believe in God and do good.

—VOLTAIRE

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